



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 6

1445 ROSS AVENUE, SUITE 1200
DALLAS, TX 75202-2733

February 13, 2012

Maria McGaha
United States Forest Service
Southwestern Region
333 Broadway SE
Albuquerque, NM 87102

Dear Ms. McGaha:

In August 2010, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 6 released the Grants Mining District Five-Year Plan. That document is a result of the collaboration of multiple federal agencies, including the United States Forest Service (USFS), state agencies, and Tribes to address contamination from the legacy uranium milling and mining that occurred in the Grants Mining District (GMD) in northwestern New Mexico. One of the main objectives and specific components included in the Plan is to assess and cleanup legacy uranium mines.

Located within the GMD are five (5) legacy uranium mines located on USFS lands: San Mateo, Taffy, Zia, La Jara, and Vallejo. The EPA is aware of the actions being conducted on the San Mateo uranium mine, as EPA concurred on the issuance of the Unilateral Administrative Order to the potentially responsible party compelling action. In email correspondence between myself and Mr. Steven McDonald, USFS On-Scene Coordinator, in November 2011, Mr. McDonald informed me that investigations were planned for the other four (4) uranium mines located on USFS lands.

Pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the EPA Region 6 and the USFS Southwestern Region (June 2011), response actions on these mine sites should be coordinated between our agencies. However, EPA is deferring the investigations to the USFS. Enclosed are Superfund Site Strategy Recommendations for each of the mines, summarizing information known to date about the mines and deferring the investigations of these four mines to USFS. As the investigations proceed, actions to address releases from the mine sites should be coordinated with EPA, pursuant to the MOU.

We look forward to working with USFS on the very important issue of legacy uranium mining.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Lisa Marie Price", is positioned above the typed name.

Lisa Marie Price
Grants Mining District Coordinator
EPA Region 6



Enclosure

cc: Steven McDonald, OSC USFS
Chris Petersen, EPA
Dana Bahr, NMED
John Pfeil, MMD

Steven McDonald
United States Forest Service
Southwestern Region
333 Broadway SE
Albuquerque, NM 87102

Dear Mr. McDonald:

In August 2010, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 6 released the Grants Mining District Five-Year Plan. This document is a result of the collaboration of multiple federal agencies, including the United States Forest Service (USFS), state agencies, and tribal governments, to address contamination from the legacy uranium mining and milling that occurred in the Grants Mining District (GMD) in northwestern New Mexico. One of the main objectives and specific components included in the Plan is to assess and cleanup legacy uranium mines.

Located within the GMD are five (5) legacy uranium mines located on USFS lands: San Mateo, Tally, San Luis, and Valley. The EPA is aware of the actions being conducted on the San Mateo uranium mine, as EPA commented on the issuance of the National Administrative Order to the potentially responsible party (concluding action). In email correspondence between myself and Mr. Steven McDonald, USFS On-Scene Coordinator in November 2011, Mr. McDonald informed me that investigations were planned for the other four (4) uranium mines located on USFS lands.

Pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the EPA Region 6 and the USFS Southwestern Region (June 2011), response actions on these sites should be coordinated between our agencies. However, EPA is initiating the investigations to the USFS. Enclosed are suggested Site Strategy Recommendations for each of the four mines. Information known to date about the mines and defining the investigations of these four mines to USFS. As the investigation process, comments to address requests from the mine sites should be coordinated with EPA pursuant to the MOU.

We look forward to working with USFS on the very important issue of legacy uranium mining.

Sincerely,

John Pfeil
Grants Mining District Coordinator
EPA Region 6